

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Northern District of California

United States of America)

v.)

RICHARD LAURENCE STEWART)

Case No.)

3-15-71361)

Defendant(s)

FILED
2015 OCT 19 P 2:26
SUSAN Y. SHING
CLERK, US DISTRICT COURT
NO. DIST. OF CA.
MAG

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of Oct. 27, 2014 until Oct. 16, 2015 in the county of San Francisco in the
Northern District of California, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

18 U.S.C. 2113(a)

Offense Description

Bank Robbery

Maximum 20 Years Imprisonment; Maximum Fine of \$250,000; Maximum
Supervised Release of 5 years; Mandatory \$100 Special Assessment

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

Please see attached affidavit of Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent Adrienne Sparrow.

Approved as to form

AUSA Shailika S. Kotiya

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.


Complainant's signature

Adrienne Sparrow, FBI Special Agent

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date:

Oct 19, 2015



Judge's signature

City and state:

San Francisco, California

Hon. Elizabeth D. Laporte, Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**AFFIDAVIT OF SPECIAL AGENT ADRIENNE SPARROW IN SUPPORT OF A
CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND ARREST WARRANT**

I, Adrienne G., Sparrow, Special Agent ("SA") of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), being duly sworn, hereby declare as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent ("SA") with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and have been so employed for more than 19 years. For most of my career I have been assigned to a Violent Crimes/Major Offenders ("VCMO") Squad. As a current member of the San Francisco FBI Office VCMO/Gang/Criminal Enterprise Squad I have conducted and participated in investigations of federal law, including bank robbery, extortion, kidnapping, crimes against children, and major theft.

PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT

2. This affidavit is being submitted in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant charging RICHARD LAURENCE STEWART ("Stewart"), with violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a), Bank Robbery. Specifically, there is probable cause to believe that on or about October 27, 2014, until October 16, 2015, Stewart robbed five banks, within the Northern District of California. Stewart is also believed to be involved in approximately seven other bank robberies but, as outlined below, upon execution of the search warrant, law enforcement agents found physical evidence directly linking Stewart to five bank robberies.

3. The facts and information set forth in this affidavit are based on my personal observations, my training and experience, and as specifically attributed below, information obtained from law enforcement officers, reports and witnesses. To the extent that any information in the affidavit is not within my personal knowledge, it has been made available to

me through reliable law enforcement sources, and I believe such information to be true. This affidavit is made for the sole purpose of demonstrating probable cause for the issuance of the requested complaint and arrest warrant, and does not purport to set forth all my knowledge of, or investigation into, this matter. In addition, where I report information I learned from others or from reviewing documents and reports prepared by others, such information is recounted in sum and substance and in relevant part.

SUMMARY

4. Since 10/27/2014, the FBI has been investigating a series of bank robberies committed by an individual dubbed the “Straw Hat Robber.” The robber wore disguises, utilized a demand note, and often made verbal demands for money from the victim tellers. The tellers were afraid and complied with his demands. The different victim bank tellers provided similar descriptions of the bank robber, and bank surveillance video depicted the same individual at the various banks. The investigation later identified Richard Laurence Stewart as the bank robbery suspect.

APPLICABLE STATUTE

5. Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a) provides:

“Whoever, by force and violence, or by intimidation, takes, or attempts to take, from the person or presence of another, or obtains or attempts to obtain by extortion any property or money or any other thing of value belonging to, or in the care, custody, control, management, or possession of, any bank, credit union, or any savings and loan association . . . shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.”

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

I. Background

6. Throughout San Francisco, California from October 27, 2014 through October 16, 2015, there have been twelve bank robberies believed to have been committed by the same

individual. The robber was dubbed the “Straw Hat” Bandit after his first robbery where he wore a tan colored fedora-style hat. There is probable cause to believe the individual (hereafter referred as the “robber”) is responsible for at least the following five robberies:

- October 27, 2014 – Chase, 360 Bay Street, San Francisco
- November 8, 2014 – Citibank, 1801 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco
- May 13, 2015 – Bank of America, 2310 Fillmore Street, San Francisco
- October 14, 2015 – US Bank, 443 Castro Street, San Francisco
- October 16, 2015 – California Bank, 1696 Post Street, San Francisco

7. Throughout most of the robberies, the robber used a demand note and took the demand note back following the robbery. The verbage of the notes often stated, “This is a robbery” and stated that the robber wanted hundred dollar bills or “larger bills.” Some of the notes also indicated that the tellers should not activate their alarms or place any anti-theft devices among the provided money. Throughout the robberies, investigators and various witnesses have consistently observed the robber to be a white male, approximately five feet, nine inches tall, brown hair, who wears various costumes including glasses, wigs, fake beards, mustaches, and hats. In most of the incidents he has worn a glove on one hand and he has often carried a large cardboard envelope.

8. On October 27, 2014, Chase Bank at 360 Bay Street, San Francisco, CA was robbed by a lone white male. The robber stated to the teller, “This is a robbery. Give me all your 100s.” The robber also told the teller to remove the straps from the money and asked whether there were any security devices. The robber took the money and placed it in a small bag and left the bank. The robber was described as a white male, in his forties, approximately 5’10”,

thin build, wearing a straw hat, a button-down shirt with vertical stripes, eyeglasses, and a fake mustache.

9. On November 8, 2014, Citibank at 1801 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California, was robbed by a lone white male. The robber passed a demand note to the teller, requesting no tracking devices or dye, and demanding the teller to do what was asked, “without making it worse than it needs to be.” The robber took the money and placed it into a FedEx envelope. The robber was described as a white male, wearing a black jacket, a white shirt, one latex glove, eyeglasses, and a fake mustache.

10. On May 13, 2015, Bank of America at 2310 Fillmore Street, San Francisco, California was robbed by a lone white male. The robber approached the victim teller and presented a demand note to the teller. The male passed a demand note to the teller which stated, “This is a robbery. I want 100s from all drawers. If you stay calm and follow directions...” The robber was a white male, approximately 5’8”, wearing a dark brown cowboy hat, a fake beard, mustache and sideburns, and one glove on his right hand. The teller complied with the robber’s demands. The robber took the money, put it in a zippered pouch, and fled the bank. Surveillance video footage of the robber was obtained from the bank.

11. A bank teller saw the robber leave the area in a DeSoto Cab parked on Clay Street across the street from the bank. The taxi was later stopped by the San Francisco Police Department (“SFPD”). The taxi driver advised that he was dispatched to the area of the bank where an unidentified man entered his taxi and told him to wait for his friend. When the second individual got into the taxi, the first individual exited the taxi and walked away. The driver described one of the men as a white male, in his forties, and wearing a fake beard. The driver also advised that the second male requested to be taken to the area of Golden Gate Park. The

driver recalled that while on the road, the male asked to pay with a \$100 bill and asked if the driver would have change. Surveillance video footage obtained from a local business showed a black male with long dread locks exit the DeSoto taxi when the bank robber got in.

12. Following the interview with the taxi driver, law enforcement contacted DeSoto Cab, who stated that telephone number 415-XXX-5730 was utilized to order the taxi on May 13, 2015. A law enforcement database search determined that 415-XXX-5730 was a Google Voice number. Pursuant to a Grand Jury subpoena to Google Incorporated regarding 415-XXX-5730, the name associated with the number was “MG” (abbreviated for confidentiality). The email address connected with the Google Voice number was [**“phonetically similar to MG”**]**1958@gmail.com**. An open internet search revealed a Twitter account associated with this email and contained photographs of a black male with dreadlocks.

13. Law enforcement then searched law enforcement databases for the name “MG” with a year of birth of 1958 in California. The search revealed only one “MG” in San Francisco with the birth year of 1958. A California driver’s license photograph of MG matched the photo of the male depicted in the Twitter photo.

14. Toll records for telephone number 415-XXX-5730 were also provided pursuant to a Grand Jury subpoena. Analysis of the telephone toll records showed that 415-933-2700 and 415-938-6123 were frequently numbers called by 415-XXX-5730. Additionally, 415-933-2700 was the number called before and immediately after the bank robbery. Telephone number 415-933-2700 was identified as cellular telephone on the MetroPCS network. Telephone number 415-933-2700 was associated in public records with a Richard Laurence Stewart, who resides at 1369 9th Avenue, Apartment 6, San Francisco, CA 94122. A California driver’s license photo of Richard Stewart depicts a white male with similar facial features and physical characteristics to

the bank robber. Stewart has a criminal history involving fraudulent checks, forgery, and possession of drugs.

15. Telephone number 415-938-6123 was also identified as a frequently contacted number from the records obtained for telephone number, 415-XXX-5730. A law enforcement database search revealed that 415-938-6123 was a Google Voice number. Pursuant to a Grand Jury subpoena sent to Google Incorporated regarding 415-938-6123, the number was associated with the name "Rick S" and email address, **ph0009999@gmail.com**. A second Grand Jury subpoena sent to Google Incorporated regarding **ph0009999@gmail.com** revealed a SMS recovery number of 415-933-2700. As previously noted, telephone number 415-933-2700 was associated in public records with a Richard Stewart at 1369 9th Avenue, San Francisco, California.

16. On October 14, 2015, US Bank at 443 Castro Street, San Francisco, California, was robbed by a lone white male. The robber passed a demand note that stated, "This is a robbery. Please remain calm." The robber then asked for the note back. The robber stated he wanted "large bills." The robber put the money in a United States Postal Service envelope and exited the bank. The robber was described as a white male in his forties, approximately 5'9", wearing a tan and grey fedora hat, a striped button-down shirt, eyeglasses, one surgical glove, a black curly wig and fake beard and mustache. Bank surveillance footage also shows the robber wearing brownish-green "Vans" type shoes with white soles. The robber appears to be the same individual who committed the other robberies in the series listed above.

17. SFPD officers were notified of the existence of a bank robbery and followed the electronic tracking device signal to a Muni bus, where they recovered the device from inside the bus. Responding officers were asked to conduct surveillance at 1369 9th Avenue immediately

after the robbery. Shortly after arriving at the residence a male fitting the description of Richard Stewart exited 1369 9th Avenue, Apartment 6, and was briefly detained. This individual identified himself as Richard Stewart, date of birth 01/29/1963. Stewart stated that he has lived in Apartment #6 for three years. He provided his telephone number as 415-938-6123. Officers took a photograph of Stewart during his detention, which I have observed. Stewart appears to be wearing the same jeans and greenish-brown "Vans" type shoes as the bank robber from October 14, 2015.

18. On October 16, 2015, California Bank and Trust at 1696 Post Street, San Francisco, California was robbed by a lone white male. The robber pulled a demand note out of a blue folder and passed it to the victim teller. The note stated "This is a robbery." Then the robber verbally told the teller words to the effect of, "This is a robbery. I only want large bills. Don't pull any alarms." The robber took the money and exited the bank. The robber was described as a white male, approximately 5'10", thin build, wearing a button down shirt with diagonal stripes and a black t-shirt underneath, dark colored "Vans" types shoes with a white sole, carrying a blue folder and one surgical glove.

II. Application for Search Warrant

19. Based upon the foregoing investigation, on October 16, 2015, law enforcement submitted an affidavit in support of an application for a search warrant for Stewart's residence at 1369 9th Avenue, Apartment 6, San Francisco, California, to the Honorable United States Magistrate Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley.

20. On October 16, 2015, Judge Corley signed a search warrant for Stewart's residence at 1369 9th Avenue, Apartment 6, San Francisco, California.

III. Execution of Search Warrant

21. On October 18, 2015, law enforcement executed the search warrant for Stewart's residence at 1369 9th Avenue, Apartment 6, San Francisco, California. Richard Stewart and MG were located at the residence. A search of the residence revealed the following items of evidence which were described in the various "Straw Hat" robberies:


- One brown leather cowboy type hat (as depicted in bank surveillance video from the Bank of America robbery on 05/13/2015)
- One straw tan fedora style hat with grey band (as depicted in the bank surveillance film from the Chase bank robbery on 10/27/2014 and the 10/14/2015 robbery of US Bank)
- Multiple USPS envelopes (as described by victims in the US Bank robbery on 10/14/2015)
- One pair of greenish-brown "Vans" type shoes (as depicted in the bank surveillance video from the US Bank robbery on 10/14/2015 and the California Bank and Trust on 10/16/2015)
- A demand note with the words, "This is a robbery. Remain calm and discreet."
- Black jacket (as depicted in the bank surveillance video from the 11/08/2014 robbery of Citibank)
- One piece of a fake facial hair accessory with adhesive, (as depicted in bank surveillance footage from all the above listed robberies)
- Surgical gloves (as depicted in bank surveillance video from Chase Bank, Citibank, US Bank and California Bank and Trust)

22. MG was voluntarily interviewed at the residence and provided his Google voice telephone number as 415-XXX-5730 and his email address as [**“phonetically similar to MG”**]**1958@gmail.com**. Richard Stewart was arrested on probable cause by SFPD for the October 14, 2105, robbery of US Bank. A recorded custodial interview was conducted with Stewart and he admitted to robbing one bank, but would not provide dates or specific locations and stated that he could not remember. Stewart admitted to having a lot of financial problems. Stewart provided his Google Voice telephone number as 415-938-6123 and his email address as Rick4155@gmail.com. When asked where he bought the disguises Stewart stated he bought them at Halloween stores.

CONCLUSION

23. Based upon my training and experience, the investigation to date, my review of bank surveillance photographs, interviews of “MG” and Richard Stewart, and a review of the evidence obtained from the search warrant conducted at the resident of Richard Stewart, I believe that the foregoing facts and observations establish probable cause that Richard Laurence Stewart robbed Chase Bank of October 27, 2014, Citibank on November 8, 2014, Bank of America on May 13, 2015, US Bank on October 14, 2015, and California Bank & Trust on October 16, 2015, all in San Francisco, California, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a).

Dated: Oct 19, 2015


ADRIENNE SPARROW
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to before me this 19 day of October 2015


THE HONORABLE ELIZABETH D. LAPORTE
United States Magistrate Judge